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Title : STRANDING NETWORK IN PERU: 110 RECORDED MEDICAL CASES REVEAL HUMAN INDUCED MORTALITY AS MAIN CAUSES.

Category : Conservation

Student :

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Abstract : Through out many years, marine mammal strandings in Peru were not recorded and only cetaceans were registered opportunistically when found on markets or near human populations on unofficially species databases. Since 2000, ORCCAMM has been recording marine mammal strandings on regular bases. This is the first chronological study done along the Peruvian coast, establishing the first Marine Mammal Stranding Network for registration, rescue, rehabilitation and conservation of pinnipeds, cetaceans and marine otters. Each case has been registered with an accession number and the location obtained with global positioning system. Each case includes biometrics, physical condition, necropsy findings, laboratory findings and cause of death. In those live cases, they were followed with a medical history, physical examination, biometrics, laboratory results and field tag number for further identification and monitoring. The present study reveals the causes of 110 strandings, 11 species recorded from December 2000 to June 2003, in the central coast of Peru (12º19.45'S - 76º51.16'W; 13º55.12'S - 22º22.34'W). The highest stranding number was due to human interaction (n=76). South American sea-lion (Otaria flavescens) is the species with higher frequency of stranding (n=66). Strandings due to proved illness (n=8) included gastric impactation, cancer and infectious diseases. The purpose of this study is to highlight the importance of the South Pacific Marine Mammal Center in Peru, and contribute with the creation of a plan for future conservation and management of stranded marine mammals.